



**U.S. Department of Justice**

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For Immediate Release  
June 24, 2004

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**NEWS RELEASE**

U.S. Attorney Paul J. McNulty announced that a federal grand jury returned an indictment today charging Denis Rivera, also known as "Conejo," 20, of Alexandria, Virginia; Oscar Antonio Grande, also known as "Pantera," 21, of Fairfax, Virginia; Ismael Juarez Cisneros, also known as "Arana," 25, of Vienna, Virginia, and Oscar Alexander Garcia-Orellana, also known as "Gato," 31, of Fairfax, Virginia, with the murder of Brenda Paz, also known as "Smiley" whose body was discovered in Shenandoah County, Virginia, on July 17, 2003. The five count indictment charges all four defendants with conspiracy to tamper with a witness or an informant; conspiracy to retaliate against a witness or informant; killing a person aiding a federal investigation; tampering with a witness or an informant and retaliating against a witness or an informant. All five counts are punishable by the death penalty or imprisonment for life. They are all currently in custody.

This murder involved the slaying of a 17-year-old pregnant federal witness, Paz, before she could testify in a pending federal trial in the Eastern District of Virginia. In November 2003 Rivera was found guilty of conspiracy to commit murder and first degree murder for the murder of Joaquin Diaz on Dangerfield Island on September 16, 2001. Rivera is serving a life sentence.

As revealed in indictment, each defendant is a member of the Mara Salvatrucha, also known as "MS-13." Rivera is a member of the "BGLS" clique, also known as the Big Gangsters Locos Salvatrucha; Grande and Cisneros are members of the "CLS" clique, also known as the Centrales Locos Salvatrucha; and Garcia-Orellana is a member of the "MDLS" clique, also known as the Modesto Locos Salvatrucha.

"Today's charges are a major step forward in our united law enforcement efforts against gang violence in Northern Virginia. Through the extraordinary cooperation of over a dozen law enforcement agencies, the most serious federal charges have been brought against a group of vicious, violent criminals. In addition, this indictment demonstrates that those who threaten or retaliate against witnesses in criminal investigations will be dealt with in the most severe terms" stated U.S. Attorney McNulty.

Mr. McNulty also praised the work of the Shenandoah Sheriff's Office; Virginia State Police; Alexandria, Arlington County, Fairfax County and Montgomery County Police Departments; United States Park Police; Federal Bureau of Investigation; Bureau of Alcohol,

Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives; United States Marshals Service; Arlington County and

Fairfax County Sheriffs' Departments; the 10<sup>th</sup> District Task Force and the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).

It should be noted that all defendants are innocent until proven guilty.

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